

Subject: **Gold King Mine Release - Regional Update #18**
Date: **31 August 2015**

Background

The Gold King Mine near Silverton, Colorado has had a continuous discharge of acidic mine drainage that is a historic contributor of lead, arsenic, zinc, copper, and cadmium into the Cement Creek drainage of the Animas River watershed. On August 5, 2015, an estimated 3 million gallons of mine wastewater released into the upper portions of Cement Creek, and into the Animas River.

- Based on EPA surface water data collected following the August 5, 2015 Gold King Mine release, San Juan River water quality in Navajo Nation has returned to pre-event conditions. EPA issued a press release on August 19, 2015 stating that water quality in the San Juan River has now returned to levels measured before the release entered the Navajo Nation.
- EPA Region 9 continues to coordinate with representatives from the Navajo Nation, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the States of AZ, Utah, NM, and federal agencies Bureau of Reclamation, the National Park Service, and US Geological Survey. EPA R9 is coordinating with R8, R6, involved State agencies and Navajo Nation to develop a long-term sampling strategy for implementation by the three EPA Regions.
- The EPA national website now includes both San Juan River and Lake Powell data.

Current Actions

- **Sampling on the San Juan River has resumed on a reduced basis for the week of 31 August. Surface water and sediment samples were taken at five locations along the San Juan River on 31 August 2015. The sampling schedule for the week of August 31st is for surface water and sediment samples to be taken on Monday, 8/31 and Thursday 9/3, with one sampling team. Force protection will be provided.**
- **Sampling of water and sediment in Lake Powell will conclude on Sunday, 30 August 2015.**
- **One alfalfa delivery was made on 29 August 2015, to the Navajo Mountain Chapter. Alfalfa delivery was scheduled for the Tees Nos Pos Chapter, but no one was available to receive the delivery. An alfalfa delivery of 384 bales will be made on 31 August 2015 to the San Juan Chapter. The total feed number currently stands at 4698 bales delivered.**

Community Outreach

- The Public Hotline number **(1-844-607-9700)**
- Liaison officers are continuing outreach with Navajo community members and representatives of the Navajo Nation.

Personnel On-Site

1 R9 OSC 1 R9 LNO 2 USCG PST 2 START Contractors